

What is Claimed:

1 1. A method for configuring an electronic program guide controller, the
2 electronic program guide controller capable of generating for display on a display device a
3 electronic program guide grid pattern containing program cells having associated program
4 lengths, the grid including one or more rows and a plurality of columns, wherein each row
5 corresponds to a program channel, each column represents a predefined period of time,
6 and program cells with lengths exceeding the predefined period of time span multiple
7 columns, the method comprising the steps of:

8 receiving instructions of a user at an electronic program guide controller, the
9 electronic program guide controller capable of being configured in at least two time shift
10 modes, the received instructions for selecting one of the at least two time shift modes; and

11 configuring the electronic program guide controller in one of the at least two
12 time shift modes responsive to the received instructions.

1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least two time shift modes
2 include at least two time shift modes selected from a group of time shift modes consisting
3 of a column time shift mode, a program cell time shift mode, and a user defined time
4 period shift mode.

1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein one of the at least two time shift
2 modes is a column time shift mode and wherein the method further comprises the step of:

3 receiving shift instructions; and

4 shifting the grid pattern time focus column by column responsive to the shift
5 instructions when the electronic program guide controller is configured in the column time
6 shift mode.

1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein one of the at least two time shift
2 modes is a program cell time shift mode and wherein the method further comprises the
3 step of:

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4 receiving shift instructions; and

5 shifting the grid pattern time focus program cell by program cell responsive
6 to the shift instructions when the electronic program guide controller is configured in the
7 program cell time shift mode.

1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein one of the at least two time shift
2 modes is a user defined time period shift mode, the received instructions are further for
3 configuring a user defined time period for the user defined time period shift mode, and the
4 method further comprises the step of:

5 receiving a shift instruction; and

6 shifting the grid pattern time focus by the user defined time period
7 responsive to the shift instruction when the electronic program guide controller is
8 configured in the user defined time period shift mode.

1 6. A system for configuring an electronic program guide controller, the
2 electronic program guide controller capable of generating for display on a display device a
3 grid pattern containing program cells having associated program lengths, the grid
4 including one or more rows and a plurality of columns, wherein each row corresponds to a
5 program channel, each column represents a predefined period of time, and program cells
6 with lengths exceeding the predefined period of time span multiple columns, the system
7 comprising:

8 means for configuring an electronic program guide controller capable of
9 being configured in at least two time shift modes responsive to a configuration signal; and

10 means for generating the configuration signal responsive to user instructions
11 to select one of the at least two time shift modes.

1 7. The system of claim 6, wherein one of the at least two time shift
2 modes is a column time shift mode and wherein the system further comprises:

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3 means for receiving shift instructions; and

4 means for shifting the grid pattern time focus column by column responsive
5 to the shift instructions when the electronic program guide controller is configured in the
6 column time shift mode.

1 8. The system of claim 6, wherein one of the at least two time shift
2 modes is a program cell time shift mode and wherein the system further comprises:

3 means for receiving shift instructions; and

4 means for shifting the grid pattern time focus program cell by program cell
5 responsive to the shift instructions when the electronic program guide controller is
6 configured in the program cell time shift mode.

1 9. The system of claim 6, wherein one of the at least two time shift
2 modes is a user defined time period shift mode, the received instructions are further for
3 configuring a user defined time period for the user defined time shift mode, and the
4 system further comprises:

5 means for receiving a shift instruction; and

6 means for shifting the grid pattern time focus by the user defined time
7 period responsive to the shift instruction when the electronic program guide controller is
8 configured in the user defined time period shift mode.

1 10. A computer readable medium including software that is configured to
2 control a general purpose computer to implement a method for configuring an electronic
3 program guide controller, the electronic program guide controller capable of generating for
4 display on a display device a grid pattern containing program cells having associated
5 lengths, the grid including one or more rows and a plurality of columns, wherein each row
6 corresponds to a program channel, each column represents a predefined period of time,
7 and program cells with lengths exceeding the predefined period of time span multiple
8 columns, the method comprising the steps of:

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9 receiving instructions of a user at an electronic program guide controller, the
10 electronic program guide controller capable of being configured in at least two time shift
11 modes, the received instructions for selecting one of the at least two time shift modes; and

12 configuring the electronic program guide controller in one of the at least two
13 time shift modes responsive to the received instructions.

1 11. The computer readable medium of claim 10, wherein one of the at
2 least two time shift modes is a column time shift mode and wherein the software
3 implemented method further comprises the step of:

4 receiving shift instructions; and

5 shifting the grid pattern time focus column by column responsive to the shift
6 instructions when the electronic program guide controller is configured in the column time
7 shift mode.

1 12. The computer readable medium of claim 10, wherein one of the at
2 least two time shift modes is a program cell time shift mode and wherein the software
3 implemented method further comprises the step of:

4 receiving shift instructions; and

5 shifting the grid pattern time focus program cell by program cell responsive
6 to the shift instructions when the electronic program guide controller is configured in the
7 program cell time shift mode.

1 13. The computer readable medium of claim 10, wherein one of the at
2 least two time shift modes is a user defined time period shift mode, the received
3 instructions are further for configuring a user defined time period for the user defined time
4 period shift mode, and the software implemented method further comprises the step of:

5 receiving a shift instruction; and

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6 shifting the grid pattern time focus by the user defined time period
7 responsive to the shift instruction when the electronic program guide controller is
8 configured in the user defined time shift mode.

1 14. An electronic program guide apparatus capable of receiving an
2 electronic program guide signal and generating for display on a display device a grid
3 pattern containing program cells having associated program lengths from the electronic
4 program guide signal, the grid including one or more rows and a plurality of columns,
5 wherein each row corresponds to a program channel, each column represents a predefined
6 period of time, and program cells having a length that exceeds the predefined period of
7 time span multiple columns, the electronic program guide controller comprising:

8 a controller that receives instructions of a user to select one of at least two
9 time shift modes, the controller configured to receive the electronic program guide signal,
10 to generate the grid pattern from the electronic program guide signal, and to shift the grid
11 pattern time focus responsive to user shift instructions in accordance with the selected one
12 of the at least two time shift modes; and

13 an on-screen display processor coupled between the controller and the
14 display device, the on-screen display processor being configured to provide the generated
15 grid pattern as a video signal to the display device.

1 15. The apparatus of claim 14, further comprising:

2 a transport decoder coupled to the controller, the transport decoder
3 configured to receive the electronic program guide and pass the received electronic
4 program guide to the controller.

1 16. The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising:

2 a display device coupled to the on-screen display processor configured to
3 display the video signal.

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1 17. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the at least two time shift modes
2 include at least two time shift modes selected from a group of time shift modes consisting
3 of a column time shift mode, a program cell time shift mode, and a user defined time
4 period shift mode.

1 18. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein one of the at least two time shift
2 modes is a column time shift mode in which the grid pattern time focus is shifted column
3 by column responsive to the shift instructions when the column time shift mode is
4 selected.

1 19. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein one of the at least two time shift
2 modes is a program cell time shift mode in which the grid pattern time focus is shifted
3 program cell by program cell responsive to the shift instructions when the program cell
4 time shift mode is selected.

1 20. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein one of the at least two time shift
2 modes is a user defined time period shift mode, the controller further receives instructions
3 to configure a user defined time period for the user defined time period shift mode, and
4 the grid pattern time focus is shifted by the user defined time period responsive to the
5 shift instruction when the user defined time period shift mode is selected.